



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

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NOAA Fisheries Announces a Final Rule for South Atlantic Golden Tilefish

NOAA Fisheries has published a final rule to implement Amendment 18B to the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region. Amendment 18B establishes a longline endorsement program to limit participation and reduce overcapacity in the golden tilefish component of the snapper-grouper fishery. A final rule implementing these regulations published in the *Federal Register* on April 23, 2013 (78 FR 23858), with an effective date of May 23, 2013.

The final rule for Amendment 18B includes:

- An endorsement program for the longline sector of the golden tilefish component of the snapper-grouper fishery.
- Establishment of landings criteria to determine who will receive endorsements. Only golden tilefish fishermen who meet certain landings criteria and also have a valid Unlimited South Atlantic Snapper-Grouper Permit will receive an endorsement and be allowed to use longline gear to harvest golden tilefish.
- An appeals process for the golden tilefish endorsement program.
- Establishment of a procedure to allow transferability of golden tilefish endorsements.
- Allocation of 75% of the commercial annual catch limit to the longline sector and 25% to the hook-and-line sector.
- Modification of the golden tilefish trip limits to remove the 300 pound gutted weight trip limit when 75% of the commercial annual catch limit is caught.
- Establishment of a 500 pound gutted weight trip limit for those who do not qualify for a golden tilefish endorsement.

This bulletin serves as a Small Entity Compliance Guide, complying with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996.

This bulletin provides only a summary of the information regarding the existing regulations. Any discrepancies between this bulletin and the regulations as published in the *Federal Register* will be resolved in favor of the *Federal Register*.

More Information

For more information on Amendment 18B please click on this link to the Amendment 18B Frequently Asked Questions <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sf/SASnapperGrouperHomepage.htm> or view the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Web page at: www.safmc.net.

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